

AN ADDRESS :

TO

THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,

AND OF

KANSAS TERRITORY,

BY THE FREE STATE TOPEKA CONVENTION.

HELD MARCH 10, 1857.

LEAVENWORTH CITY :

PRINTED AT THE LEAVENWORTH TIMES OFFICE.

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ADDRESS.

The Committee appointed by the late Free State Convention, held at Topeka, K. T., on the 10th of March, 1857, to whom was committed the charge of preparing an address to the American people, have prepared, and respectfully submit, the following:

The Pro-Slavery Convention which assembled at Leecompton, January 12th, 1857, have issued an "address" which has been spread broad-cast over the States. In this pamphlet an attempt is made to palliate the crimes, and excuse the outrages, of which the Pro-Slavery party—sailing under the colors of "Democracy"—have been guilty, in the Territory. Nay more. It is sought to throw the entire blame and responsibility of the afflictions which have been visited upon the settlers and residents of Kansas, on the Free State men, and those active and earnest patriots who have labored with an energy that knows no defeat, and a will that knows no faltering, in behalf of freedom and free labor.

The burden of the address is that the Free State party initiated and inaugurated revolutionary and incendiary proceedings, that they rallied against the enforcement of legal enactments, laughed to scorn the authorities, and beat back the officers of justice, thereby necessitating the "law and order men" to take up arms for the preservation of peace, and for the punishment of traitors. They brand Lane, Robinson and Reeder and a host of other good men and true, as hired emissaries, animated by a fillibustering spirit, hostile to the constitution, foes to the Union of the States, and enemies to the prosperity and well-being of the Territory. They represent themselves to have been innocent, law-abiding, and inoffensive, earnestly in favor of peace and repose in Kansas, and end their address with a great rhetorical flourish, and bombastic assurances of patriotic devotion to their country, their party, and their God.

To unmask the hypocrisy, to expose the falsehoods, and reveal the contradictions and inconsistencies of this address, would be superfluous, for the throes and the anguish, the indignities and the oppressions, which the Free State men have suffered are written in characters of blood, and burned into the memory of every honest citizen of our country. Subterfuge and deceit, brazen falsehood and base perjury can avail nothing, for the great truths, in the

gigantic wrongs of Kansas' history, have been seen and known and pondered of all men, and will stand, like the Egyptian pyramids, to the surprise and the wonder of coming generations.

The Free State men have violated no law, for that which is not just is no law, and that which is devoid of justice should not be obeyed. The code attempted to be forced upon them was not enacted for proper legislation, for the regulation and protection of society, and for the development of the resources of the country, but to enslave the body and soul of every citizen, and to rivet the institution of slavery upon a soil consecrated to freedom. No honest man could endorse or subscribe to such a code, and the Free State men did not. Yet they raised no arm, neither committed any violence against their oppressors. But when they were driven from their homes, and their families treated with unheard of cruelty by this self-styled "Law and Order" party, then it was that all the higher voices of their nature appealed to them to rise and protect their rights and liberties, or sink to the level of serfs. The blood and the manhood and the muscle of Northern freemen could brook no more, for forbearance had ceased to be a virtue, and the time was come when they must vindicate their courage, and establish their right to the title of MEN.

But when their invaders were driven back, and the dissensions in a measure quieted, they once again returned to the more congenial pursuits of peace, and devoted themselves, with activity and energy, to the industrial occupations which they loved.

It is our purpose to present a brief though comprehensive sketch of what has transpired in Kansas since the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and to let the American people judge for themselves whether or not the Free State party have acted according to the dictates of justice and of right—whether or not they have been wronged and outraged, and whether they or the self-styled "Law and Order party" are responsible for the crimes and the blood which have stained the virgin soil of the Territory.

But in this cause we must take our proper position. The Free-State party of Kansas cannot act upon the defensive before a tribunal where the American people sit as judges. We arraign the self-styled "Law and Order party" of Kansas as guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors; we charge upon them the burden of guilt and of wrong, and we only ask a fair and honest verdict from the evidence and arguments we may adduce.

Although the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was violently opposed at the time of its presentation to Congress by a decided majority of the Northern Representatives, backed by the opinion of their constituents, it was endorsed as "a law" by the citizens of Kansas who desired only to have its principles and provisions faithfully carried out. A. H. Reeder was appointed Governor of the Territory un-

der the Bill, and a large Northern emigration poured into the Territory, to test the question of "popular sovereignty," and secure freedom for Kansas by a numerical preponderance.

The time came at last for electing a Territorial Legislature and a Delegate to Congress. How this election was carried is a matter of history. The Missourians poured into the Territory, violated the sanctity of the ballot-box, outraged all law and decency, and thwarted the voice and the will of the actual residents. This was on the 31st day of March, 1855—a day never to be forgotten—when the invading hordes, with insulting banners, on which were inscribed, "Death to the d—d Abolitionists," "A slave State for Kansas," "No quarter for Free State men," and other devices, and with bowie knives and revolvers, bore down upon the polls, ousted the judges and clerks of election, and stuffed the boxes with illegal ballots. In this mode, and by such means, the first so-called Legislature of Kansas was elected—four thousand nine hundred and eight illegal votes being polled by Missourians. Only four days had been allowed to protest against the return of the election judges, and the formalities were attended to but in six districts, in which Governor Reeder ordered new elections. At these elections—May 22d, 1855—all the Free State nominees were elected, except at Leavenworth City, where the Missourians played their old game of invasion and illegal voting, and on the 25th, a few days subsequently, a Pro-Slavery meeting was held at which the Missourians were endorsed, and the outrage on Mr. Phillips, a Free State man who had been taken into Missouri, tarred and feathered, and sold at auction to a negro, endorsed.

The first meeting of the Missouri-elected Legislature of Kansas took place at Pawnee, near Fort Riley. It appeared that there was but one Free State man in the Council, who immediately resigned his seat, and the Legislature ousted all the Free State members of the House elected at the special elections ordered by Gov. Reeder, and gave their seats to their Pro-Slavery opponents. An act was then passed for the removal of the seat of government to Shawnee Mission, near the Missouri border, which was finally adopted over Gov. Reeder's veto.

All Territorial offices were filled by these "Legislators," or by Commissioners appointed by them, and Gov. Reeder, who bravely stood up against the illegal Assembly, and their enactments, was removed, the Administration falling into the hands of Secretary Woodson, who actively co-operated with the Pro-Slavery party.

A code of laws was enacted by the bogus Legislature pronounced by General Cass to be "a disgrace to the age," and having provided for another election, the fraudulent body adjourned *sine die*.

On the 1st of October, Whitfield was returned as a Delegate to

Congress by a vote of two thousand eight hundred, four-fifths of which was polled by Missourians, as the Free-State men refused to vote.

Wilson O. Shannon, having been appointed Governor of Kansas, acted with the Pro-Slavery organization, took part in their meetings, and, subsequently, in response to a call from bogus-sheriff Jones, declared the Territory in a state of open rebellion, and issued orders for the enlistment of men to enforce the Territorial laws. An army of invaders marched towards Lawrence, scattering terror in their course, while Atchison and Stringfellow appealed for aid to the South—a Free State printing press was destroyed at Leavenworth, and all the horrors of a war of extermination visited upon the peaceful settlers. President Pierce lent his sanction to the invaders and authorized Shannon to call out the United States troops. Companies from the purlicue and grog shops of the South, under a Major Buford, took an active part in outgaging the Free State citizens, and the Territory presented the awful spectacle of a region overrun by fire and sword.

In the meanwhile the actual residents of Kansas were adopting initiatory measures for the organization of a State Government, for the election of a Legislature and for the protection of their lives and property, as well as for the securing a voice in legislative proceedings, and the filling of official posts. A convention of the people assembled at Lawrence, August 14th, 1855, repudiated the authority of the late Legislature, and recommended the election of delegates on the 25th, to meet at Big Springs, September 5th, for the consideration of public affairs. At this Convention the bogus laws were also repudiated, ex-Governor Reeder nominated as Delegate to Congress and a day appointed for the election. On the 17th of September another Convention was held at Topeka to make arrangements for electing delegates to form a Free State Constitution. This Convention selected an Executive Committee, who were invested with the authority of a provisional government, to provide for the complete organization of a State government. October 9th Reeder was elected Delegate to Congress by a vote of twenty-four hundred, and delegates, at the same time, were elected to the Constitutional Convention. This convention assembled at Topeka on the 23d, and September 11th, submitted a Constitution to the people, appointing the 4th of March, 1856, for organizing a State Government. December 15th, 1855, the Topeka Constitution was voted upon by the people, with no outbreak, except at Leavenworth City, where the election was prevented and the poll-book stolen. On the 15th of January, 1856, officers were elected under the Topeka Constitution, and Robinson chosen Governor. On the 4th of March the State Legislature met at Topeka, Gov. Robinson and other officers sworn in, the Executive Committee

discharged, and the Legislature then adjourned to meet at Topeka, July 4th.

Although these proceedings were in violation of no law, and demanded by the necessities of the occasion, and although precedent and authority could be found for them in the history of Michigan, Arkansas and California, the President of the United States issued a proclamation denouncing the formation of a State Government as an act of rebellion, and upholding and endorsing the bogus legislature. Acting upon this proclamation, and in accordance with his own base instincts, Judge Leconte charged the Grand Jury to find indictments for high treason against all who had participated in organizing the State Government. The jury succumbed, found indictments against Robinson, Lane, Reeder and many others, and presented the two Lawrence newspapers and the Free State hotel as nuisances.

Thus affairs stood when the Congressional Investigating Committee arrived in the Territory. Many obstacles were thrown in their way by the Pro-Slavery party, and every means adopted by which a fair and just investigation of Kansas affairs might be prevented. But the Committee proved equal to the arduous responsibility which devolved upon them, and well performed a noble duty. The result of their labors and the character of their report is well known. It substantiated the illegality of every election held under the enactments of the bogus legislature, and corroborated the truth of all that the Free State men of Kansas were reported to have undergone.

Up to this time the Pro-Slavery party had been guilty of committing crimes at which the blood curdles. J. W. B. Kelley had been beaten and shamefully abused at Atchison; the Rev. Pardee Butler had been lynched, tarred and feathered and sent down the Missouri on a frail raft; Collins had been cruelly murdered at Doniphan, and Dow at Hickory Point; Barber had been shot down by Major Clarke, a Government official, and Brown tortured to death near Leavenworth. And yet the murderers ran at large, boasted of their exploits, and openly defied the law. Gov. Robinson was arrested May 8th, at Lexington, Mo., and sent back to Kansas, where, with six others, he was thrown into prison and kept confined for four months.

On the 11th. Marshal Donaldson raised a force of ruffians, embracing Major Buford's "chivalric boys," and marched to destroy Lawrence under the pretence that the citizens had aided Reeder in resisting his authority. Like the swarm of Egyptian locusts, this force carried destruction as they went. Jones and Stuart, harmless and excellent citizens, were shot down like wild beasts, and upon the 24th of May the ruffians reached the city of Lawrence. The citizens were almost paralyzed with amazement as they looked upon

the angry and demoniac throngs by which their homes were surrounded. But they determined on mustering all, as in the days of Rome, from twelve to seventy, and resolved to beat back the ruthless invaders of their peace and prosperity, or fall like earnest men and patriots. The marauders, though outnumbering their opponents five to one, were yet afraid to risk a fair engagement, and sent bogus Sheriff Jones to secure their arms and cannon by promising protection to life and property. Deceived and betrayed by these pledges, in an evil hour the Free State men agreed to the terms, and the ruffians were allowed to pour into their city, and then, regardless of their pledges and plighted faith, did they commence anew the work of ruin and plunder. Two presses were destroyed, together with a beautiful new hotel, and Gov. Robinson's private house, while Atchison incited them to other deeds of violence and wrong. Scattering from Lawrence, in foraging parties, Buford's men scoured the country about like lawless pirates, as they were. Such was the policy of the "Law and Order party"—the "National Democracy" of Kansas.

When the Free State men discovered how useless, how worse than useless, it was to appeal for protection to Shannon, the infamous Governor, to the National Administration, to the legal tribunals,—when in their distant homes they found themselves forsaken, betrayed and deserted, surrounded by a relentless and blood-thirsty foe, bent on driving them from their firesides, or crimsoning the soil with their blood, then was it that they felt called upon to resort to arms and physical resistance. Inspired by a cause as pure and holy as that for which Washington fought and Warren fell, they rallied under a common banner, and went forth like the brave Magyars to defend those rights which are intuitive in the manly breast, rights and liberties which must be preserved by freemen at all hazards, if they would preserve their own self-respect. They did not "gird on their armor" out of revenge for their wrongs, neither out of any mercenary motive by which their interests might be advanced. They sought only to drive back the oppressive hordes of unprincipled invaders, and to vindicate a principle which was dear to them as life itself.

At the first engagement at Ossawatimie, the ruffians were sorely beaten. At Palmyra, or Black Jack, Captains Brown and Shore routed a band of plunderers under the lead of Pate, from Missouri. The battle of Franklin followed, in which the Free State men were also victorious. Whitfield, the bogus Delegate to Congress, who was advancing into the Territory with a large force, was unceremoniously sent back by Col. Sumner, commanding the United States Dragoons. The ruffians murdered a Free State man, Cantral, in cold blood by way of revenge, and committed other heartless depredations. During the remainder of

the month of June, the Territory was afflicted with all the horrors of a bloody civil war. Ossowattomie was sacked by a large Pro-Slavery company, who destroyed or carried off every thing of value, and shamefully abused the unarmed and defenceless citizens. Then followed the Missouri river outrages. The boats were stopped and searched—money, goods, and arms stolen, and Northern emigrants sent back penniless. Gov. Shannon, Col. Sumner and Judge Leecompte refused to interfere, and the Administration openly encouraged the depredations.

Upon the 4th of July the Free State Legislature convened at Topeka, pursuant to adjournment. It was a day memorable in the history of our government, upon which our forefathers declared their independence in a declaration which constitutes the noblest paper that graces the archives of any nation, and a marked correspondence existed between the two occasions, though separated by a long lapse of years. The Free State men of Kansas met, like the Revolutionary patriots, in a dark and trying hour. They met, as lovers of liberty, to organize against an existing oppression. They met as men who had felt the yoke of bondage, but who could not submit to the enslavement of body or soul. For peaceful deliberation they had convened, to consult the interests of their country, and to devote themselves to the administration of justice. They met in obedience to the will of the majority of the residents of Kansas, and they were entrusted with the hopes and the prayers of a suffering people. Then and there, in that sacred place and on that solemn day, was an outrage committed which must ever remain a blot upon the historic page—an outrage that mantles the cheek of every true American with shame, and paints, with vivid colors, the degeneracy and degradation of our Federal Government. For when the Legislature was on the point of coming to order, the gleam of United States arms, and the entrance of federal troops were seen, and an officer of our government ordered the Legislature to disperse. He spoke, not for himself, but for a higher official—for him who occupied the most honorable position that this or any country knows. Cromwell once dispersed a refractory parliament, and the great Napoleon an angry assembly; but these usurpations of authority were nothing in comparison to that executed by Pierce in ordering a federal officer to disperse a Legislature convened in violation of no law or established principle, in a country professing to be a free Republic. It was one of the darkest of the many dark deeds that distinguished the last Administration, and consigned it to a grave of everlasting infamy.

When reports of what was transpiring in Kansas—of Shannon's treachery, the ruffians' cruelty, and the Administration's duplicity, reached the Northern States, they were scarcely credited. Per-

sons could not believe that the detailed cruelties had been committed, or that the government could lend its sanction and endorsement to a set of ruffian invaders. But as the reports were substantiated and the frightful accounts of existing affairs verified, the Northern people awoke to a realizing sense of their duty, and contributed men and means, as well as arms and provisions, for their friends and relatives in the far West, with an alacrity and liberality that did them honor.

As Northern emigration on the Missouri river was interdicted, a new route was opened through Iowa, and Lane took charge of a large body of emigrants, who reached Kansas during the month of August. The supplies they brought, together with the evidence they furnished to the Free State men that their struggles and privations were not unappreciated, cheered and animated them with a new hope and a fresh courage. A short time previous to this, Mr. Day, the only Free State federal officer in the Territory was cruelly murdered. Col. Sumner who had exhibited some humanity toward the Free State men was superseded by Gen. Smith of Louisiana, who was expected to side entirely with the Kansas invaders.—On the 5th of August another contest took place between the respective parties, near Ossawatimie, and a set of Georgian marauders were driven from their post. At the same time Major Hoyt of Lawrence, who had been sent, single and alone, to remonstrate with a prowling band of Southerners, under Colonel Treadwell, was waylaid and murdered.

Important events followed in rapid succession, and various war-like encounters took place between the Free State and Pro-Slavery parties in which the latter were generally worsted. On the 18th of August a treaty of peace was concluded between the citizens of Lawrence and Gov. Shannon. On the same day two Free State men were murdered and SCALPED near Leavenworth, while a German who expressed his horror at the bloody work was shot dead in the streets.

The leading border-ruffians—Richardson, Atchison and Stringfellow—laboring under the hallucination that Lane was advancing into the Territory with an army as numerous as that of Xerxes, issued a proclamation to the Missourians which was promptly responded to, and numerous crowds gathered at Weston, Mo., chose Atchison commander in chief, and marched again towards Lawrence. Shannon having been removed, Woodson assumed the reins of Government and raised another force in the West to act in concert with the army of Atchinson which styled itself with sardonic irony, "The army of Law and Order in Kansas Territory." This "peaceful" army exemplified their "Law and Order propensities" by falling upon a Quaker mission and treating the settlers with cannibalistic fury. Lawrence was again in danger and was only

saved from destruction by the prompt action of Lane, who organized a force of 300 Free State men and drove Atchison across the Missouri, where he dispersed his troops engaging them to rally again on the 13th of September for "another march on the d—d Abolitionists."

Although we have recounted outrages at which the heart sickens, and which must shock the sense of every civilized community a darker chapter yet remains unwritten. The annual municipal election in Leavenworth City took place Sept. 1st. That day—which is known as Bloody Monday—and the events which transpired upon it, in their revolting and distorted features, more resembled the "reign of terror" when the streets of Paris ran blood, than an American city of the nineteenth century. The Missourians thirsting for revenge, and burning with hate and phrenzy, poured into the city, cried

"Havoc,
And let slip the dogs of war."

Col. Emory led on the infuriated mob, who committed the most horrible acts of violence. Philips was shot down at his own threshold, and bullets were fired into every part of the house.—The leading citizens were driven from their homes, and their wives and daughters subjected to every species of indignity. In the agony of despair many appealed, as only the suffering can appeal, to Gen. Smith, the commanding officer at Fort Leavenworth, for a detachment of troops to protect their families and property. But that appeal which was enough to make "a marble statue weep," met no response from the icy-hearted commander. Though he might have quelled the disturbances in a moment, no finger was lifted, and no order issued, except to command his Sergeant to drive from the Fort the afflicted citizens who had there sought temporary refuge and protection. In that act the flag of our country was disgraced, and the character of our military officers stained. It would require volumes to enumerate the outrages that were subsequently perpetrated in Leavenworth—how houses and stores were burned—how the citizens were forced upon the boats at the point of the bayonet—how men were murdered in cold blood—how the sick and the weak, innocent women and harmless children were treated with a cruelty almost beyond conception. Such were some of the more marked features which distinguished the reign of the "Law and Order party" in Leavenworth City. There may still be seen the charred and blackened ruins of many buildings that were destroyed—many are the residents who can give heart-rending accounts of what occurred during that sad period, and new-made graves upon Pilot Knob seem to plead, with a sad and mournful eloquence, against the cruel and untimely cutting off of those who sleep beneath.

During this month Lane forced Woodson, the acting Governor, to release his Free State prisoners and disband his forces. Upon the 8th, the Supreme Court met at Leecompton to try the political prisoners. The District Attorney not being ready to go on with the cases, all the prisoners were admitted to bail, and on the same day Gov. Geary arrived in the Territory. Immediately upon assuming his office he issued a proclamation commanding "all bodies of men combined, armed and equipped with munitions of war, without authority of Government, instantly to disband and quit the Territory."

In obedience to this proclamation the Free State forces disbanded, but the border ruffians, in open defiance of it, re-assembled, according to previous agreement, at Weston, Mo., and to the number of 2500 strong, with five pieces of artillery, marched towards Lawrence. It was with great difficulty that Gov. Geary, at the head of U. S. troops, by throwing himself between the invaders and Lawrence, succeeded in saving the city, and prevailing upon the Missourians to retire. In their retreat, among other outrages, they shot down an unoffending Free State man—Buffum—for remonstrating against the stealing of his horses.

The political Free-State prisoners, under indictments for treason and murder, were treated with revolting barbarity by Col. Titus and his Southern ruffians, and the citizens of Ossawatimie were once again visited by new afflictions from fresh bodies of invaders. Oct. 6th, an election took place, under bogus legislature enactment, for delegate to Congress, members of Territorial Legislature, and on the question of a Delegate Convention to adopt a State Constitution. In this election the Free-State men took no part and the border ruffians had it all their own way.

On the 13th a Free State convention was held at Topeka, and a few days afterwards another at Big Springs where protests against Whitfield's election to Congress, and memorials to Congress were adopted praying for the admission of Reeder, as representing the real sentiment of a majority of the citizens of the Territory.

During the latter part of October the trial of the Free State prisoners took place at Leecompton, before a packed jury of bitter Pro-Slavery partizans and twenty-one were sentenced by the Kansas Jeffries to five years, hard labor with ball and chain. These persons were guilty of no crime. They had acted purely in self defense at Hickory Point, and would instantly have been acquitted by a fair and honorable tribunal. Their crime in the eyes of the Court, was a devoted love of liberty, and for that devotion they were treated as felons and murderers. But in that higher court, and by that higher law which exists in, and is constituted by a just and generous people, they were not only proclaimed "not guilty,"

but crowned with honor, and loaded with grateful testimonials, as a small acknowledgment of their labors and services in the cause of freedom.

It will be remembered that while the Free State men were being subjected to the severest penalties which an unholy tribunal could inflict, their oppressors and persecutors, with hands reeking with blood that cried aloud for vengeance, were never called to account or made to answer for the laws they had outraged, and the barbarities they had perpetrated. The Judges of the Supreme Court, be it said to their eternal disgrace, threw off the spotless ermine and cloaked themselves in the polluted garments of fanatical partizanship. Before such a tribunal a charge against a Free State man, no matter how base, how unfounded or how frivolous, was equivalent to conviction. Law was a mockery, principles meaningless, and justice but a word. To illustrate the truth of what we affirm we need but cite the murder of Buffum and the subsequent action of the Supreme Court, of which Gov. Geary gives the following account: When he reached Buffum, the poor fellow was lying upon the earth in his agonies, the blood streaming from his wounds, and the cold sweat of death upon his brow. He seized the Governor's hand, and declared that as he hoped for mercy hereafter, he was innocent of all cause of offence—that it was a most foul and unprovoked murder. He asked his assassin why he sought his life or desired to take his property—that upon his efforts depended the subsistence of an aged father and mother, a deaf and dumb brother and sister—that he himself was a cripple, and therefore harmless. To this appeal he was told he was a “d——d Abolitionist, and that they intended to destroy the whole of them.” Upon which Hayes, one of the gang, seized him by the collar, and, placing the pistol against his stomach, shot him. The Governor pledged him, while he held his cold hand in his own that he would use all his power to bring his murderers to justice. “I spent,” said the Governor, “five hundred dollars to have his assassin arrested; and I would have spent five thousand dollars to have done so, if it had been necessary.” It is well known that the Governor had Hayes arrested, but scarcely was he put in prison when Leecompte issued a writ of *habeas corpus*, had him released and set at liberty upon straw bail. Hayes is now in Missouri, and is playing the gentleman. The Governor further states that after the release of Hayes, Surveyor-General Calhoun took occasion, in a public speech upon the matter, to declare that the discharge of Hayes was perfectly legal, and that it was a mistake to suppose that the Territorial laws were enacted for the benefit of any other persons than the Pro-Slavery men.

In consequence of Judge Leecompte's course in this case, and

his determined opposition to Gov. Geary, the Governor demanded his removal from the office he disgraced.

On the first Monday in January, 1857, the second bogus Legislature convened at Leecompton. A more disgraceful session could not have been conceived, nor could a body of men have been found more bitterly opposed to the views and convictions of the Free State party. Their legislation was a perfect mockery, forming a fit sequel to, and connecting link with, the enactments of that first odious and illegal body which inaugurated a "Reign of Terror" in Kansas, and spread a blighting devastation over the beautiful and peaceful face of the Territory. In vain Gov. Geary strove to moderate their fury and allay their passions. To no purpose did he veto their outrageous measures. Insensible to the dictates of reason, and deaf to the pleadings of justice, they yet had the impudence to believe that the actual residents of Kansas would be forced to acknowledge their legality as a Legislature, and the binding force of their enactments. God forbid that such another "Legislature" pollute the soil or taint the atmosphere of the Territory.

The Pro-Slavery convention that met at Leecompton on the 12th of January was an outgrowth of this rotten and pestiferous trunk—an ugly but natural excrecence. The address they coined is too palpably counterfeit to pass current, and adds but another to the formidable list of crimes of which the "Law and Order Party," or "National Democracy of Kansas," have been guilty—the crime of falsehood and perjury.

On the 4th of March, Governor Geary sent on his resignation to Washington. His reasons for this are only too well known. The faithlessness of the Federal Administration; the hostility of the Judiciary; the inactivity of the Military; the refusal to remove Leecompte; the want of funds, and the developement of conspiracies against his life, compelled him to decline. His statements prove the desperate character of the Pro-Slavery leaders who have so long disturbed the peace of the Territory, and must convince even the most skeptical that the half of what the Free State citizens have suffered has not yet been written. If it were but possible for every intelligent qualified elector of our country—either from the North or South—to come out here and examine for himself, listen to the accounts of those who have passed through the fiery ordeal of a two-year's residence, and learn, from personal observation the truth of what has occurred, loud and deep would be the indignation against the Pro-Slavery party.

Nor were the invading Missourians and Southerners the only opponents with whom the Free State men of Kansas were compelled to contend. In defiance of protests, and petitions, and memorials, of the Congressional Committee's report, and detailed

statements substantiated beyond the shadow of a doubt, a Democratic majority in Congress has not only refused to grant the Free State men redress, but even gone so far, in the madness of party zeal, as to ridicule their prayers, to admit Whitfield, the bogus Delegate, and to refuse to adopt the Topeka Constitution, which had been endorsed by fully three-fourths of the residents of Kansas.

On the 10th of March, a Free State Convention assembled at Topeka, and adopted a platform which will be found appended to this Address. In that platform it will be seen that the Free State men refuse to vote for delegates to a constitutional convention, under a register act which passed the last bogus legislature. Late developments have proved the wisdom of this policy, for by the lists of qualified electors returned by the Sheriffs of the different counties, thousands of Free State voters have been ignored, while the names of numerous unknown and mythical individuals are entered as "qualified electors." All the machinery of the election is to be controlled by Pro-Slavery partizans, and it would be suicidal for the Free State party to go into an election in the face of such odds, and with their past experience.

Although the present Federal Administration owes its success to the impression that prevailed at the North that the Chief Executive would use his influence and authority towards securing the freedom of Kansas, if such should be the will of the people, we can see as yet no indication of any such policy on the part of Mr. Buchanan, and with moderation, yet firmness, we emphatically protest against the federal appointments that have been made in the Territory, selected, as they have been, from the most guilty and obnoxious of our Pro-Slavery opponents.

Both President Buchanan, in his Inaugural, and Governor Walker, in his letter of acceptance, have pledged themselves to obtain "an open, honest, and independent expression of opinion from the *bona fide* residents of Kansas." We look to see this pledge redeemed, and feel satisfied that if it is, the next Delegate to Congress, and the next Legislature of Kansas will be pre-eminently Free State, and that, with a Free State Constitution, Kansas will come into the Union.

At the municipal election in Leavenworth City, held Monday, April 13th, a Free State Mayor was elected by a majority of 184, over all other opponents. This is the first time in the history of the city that a fair vote has been obtained, and the result may be regarded as significant of the pervading opinion in Kansas on the question of Freedom or Slavery.

Having thus delineated the course of events that have transpired in Kansas; having shown how the Free State party, though embracing more than two-thirds of the actual settlers, have been deprived, through fraud and violence, of any representation in legis-

lative assemblies, and of any voice in the enacting of laws or the selection of Territorial officials, and being threatened with the enforcement and adoption of a Slave Constitution, by Congress, for Kansas—we appeal, with the deepest sincerity and earnestness to the Northern people, without distinction of party or creed, to aid in averting such a national calamity. We ask but that Congress may adopt the Topeka Constitution which has already passed the House, or that both it and the one that will be adopted by the Pro-Slavery convention in September, be returned to the people of the Territory with an enabling act providing for a fair and honest vote of the *bona fide* residents. We ask no more than this—we *can ask no less*.

None are more devoted to our Union and our Constitution than the Free State citizens of Kansas. For the institutions of our country none can have a deeper or more loyal attachment. But we believe the purity of our government, and the integrity of our institutions can only be preserved by the admission of Kansas as a Free State. And such, we are convinced, are the convictions of a large majority of our population. Though the past is voiceful with the wrongs and oppressions to which we have been forced to submit; though the marks of a tyrannous hand with which we have been scourged have not yet been effaced, we can forget it all and forgive, if simple justice is granted us in the future.

We wish but that the slavery or Freedom of Kansas may be settled, once for all, by an honest and legal vote of the actual residents, in accordance with the principles of the Organic Act.

From our new-made homes in the distant West, far from the comforts and conveniences of settled society, yet struggling amid the hardships and difficulties coincident with a border life, and suffering from the trials and sorrows to which we have been particularly subjected, we again appeal to Northern freemen to stand by us in the dark emergency that threatens our future progress and prosperity. Let Northern representatives be instructed to support our righteous prayers and claims, and let the people, in their sovereign capacity, rising in dignity and might, cheer us with their active sympathy and earnest co-operation.

Thus will the schemes and plots of political demagogues be foiled, and the freedom of our new State be attained. To the cause, and for the principles which have become endeared and sanctified through our sufferings, we acknowledge an unwavering devotion. Strong in the confidence of truth, reliant in the sincerity of our purpose, and hopeful in the patriotism and intelligence of our purpose, we cheerfully unfurl our standard, on which is inscribed our watchword and our motto—"Free Kansas for Free

3. *Resolved*, That the Territorial laws (so called,) of Kansas had their origin in fraud, were imposed upon the Territory by usurpation and violence, in bold defiance and subversion of the Constitution, the Organic Act, and every principle of justice, and are, therefore, null and void; and we respectfully request the Territorial Executive to refuse to enforce any of said fraudulent enactments till Congress shall provide for an election of a Territorial Legislature by the people of Kansas, without interference from foreign States.

4. *Resolved*, That it is a shameless hypocrisy for a political party to adopt for their principles, the doctrine of "popular sovereignty," while they justify the most patent and flagrant violation of it, and persist in subjecting citizens of the United States to a foreign tyranny unparalleled in history.

5. *Resolved*, That the banking system chartered by the Territorial Legislature, (so called,) not only had its origin in fraud, but is a fraud in itself, and we caution all against receiving its notes and currency.

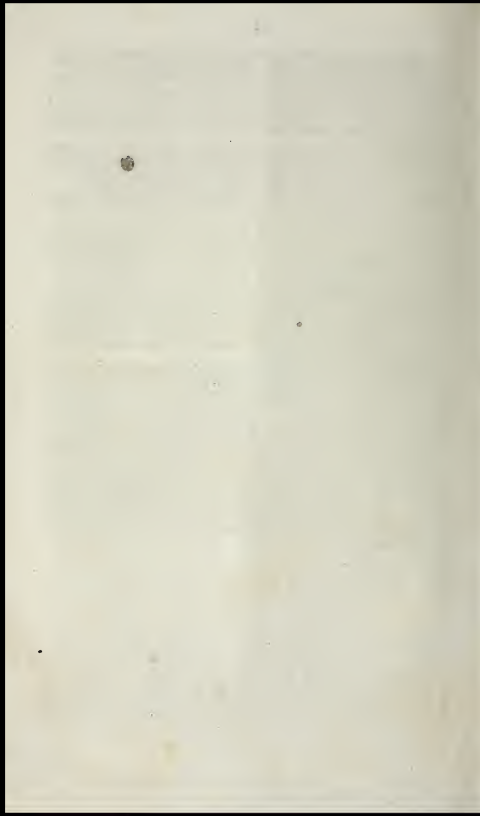
6. *Resolved*, That as good citizens we are ever willing to contribute to the support of a legitimate government, but we have no tribute voluntarily to offer to the tyranny that robs us of our constitutional and inalienable rights.

7. *Resolved*, That the act called the "rebellion act" is a relic of barbarism and more worthy to be approved and enforced by a Nero than a Geary.

8. *Resolved*, That the census act of the late Missouri Kansas Legislature, is a cheat and a swindle, requiring in one section, as a condition for voting, registration without residence, and in another residence without registration—the design of which is apparent to all who are familiar with the usurpation in Kansas.

9. *Resolved*, That with the most infamous and unscrupulous men to execute the laws and issue certificates of election, past experience has shown that legal voters are not essential to the election of any man to office, and until the people can choose their own election officers, or have them appointed by some respectable official, we request the people, the Governor of the Territory, Congress and the President of the United States, to treat all elections under Territorial auspices as an infamous mockery, and null and void.

10. *Resolved*, That the bombarding and burning of hotels and private residences, the destruction of printing presses, the pillaging and plundering of towns, the stealing of horses and cattle, and such other things, by acting Governors, Marshals and Sheriffs or their mobs, is, to say the least, disreputable business, and should these officials or any other person, attempt a repetition of the acts of the spring and summer of 1856 it will be the duty of the people at once to constitute themselves a Vigilance Committee for self-preservation.



“Labor,” to realize which we pledge anew “our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

JAMES DAVIS, *Chairman.*

LYMAN ALLEN,	PROF. W. OAKLEY.	WILLIAM MITCHELL,
A. POLLEY,	ALBERT A. GRIFFIN,	J. H. KAZE,
W. W. ROSS,	M. FENNIMORE,	J. P. MITCHELL,
REV. H. JONES,	JAMES BLOOD,	REV. J. W. GRIFFITH,
H. MILES MOORE,	REV. C. E. BLOOD,	J. W. MORRIS,
M. J. PARROTT,	REV. J. B. McAFEE,	B. F. HARDING,
C. F. CURRIER,	REV. J. GILLPATRICK,	E. FISH,
S. N. LATTA,	J. F. GOODNOE,	L. J. WORDEN,
O. B. HOLMAN,	J. A. WAKEFIELD,	J. E. STEWART,
C. ROBINSON,	A. LAZELERE,	S. B. PRENTIS.

The following resolutions, adopted at the Free State Topeka Convention, held on the 10th of March, 1857, embody the platform of the Free State party of Kansas:

Free State Platform.

WE, CITIZENS OF KANSAS, in Delegate Convention assembled at Topeka, March 10th, 1857, Resolve and Declare:

Whereas, A body of men recently assembled at Lecompton, and claiming to be the Legislative assembly of Kansas Territory, have adopted a regulation, purporting to be a law, for taking the census, and electing delegates to a constitutional convention, proposed to be held in that place, in September next, and

Whereas, The said Assembly was the creature of fraud, and its members the representatives of a people foreign to this Territory, and

Whereas, The Organic Act does not authorize the Territorial legislative powers, even when legitimately convened, to pass any enabling act, to change the government of the same, and

Whereas, The act of this assembly is partizan in its character, clearly contemplates fraud, for the recurrence of which it offers inadequate security, while it deprives the Executive of the Territory of the power to prevent or remedy such fraud, leaves the control of the census and election in the hands of pretended officers, not chosen by the people of Kansas, who are of violent characters and hostile to the best interests of the Territory; and

Whereas, Said act purports to disfranchise certain *bona fide* settlers of Kansas, who have filed their declarations of intention to become citizens, and are recognized as voters by the Organic Act; and

Whereas, There is no provision in the said regulation for submitting the constitution so framed to the vote of the people of the Territory; therefore,

Resolved, That the People of Kansas Territory cannot participate in any election under such regulation, without compromising their rights as American citizens, sacrificing the best interests of Kansas and jeopardizing the public peace.

2 Resolved, That having suffered under this misrule of persons, pretending to be the local officials of this Territory, we have lost all confidence in the integrity of the administration of the laws, however just these laws may appear to some on their face.

3 Resolved, That with the people of any Territory ‘alone,’ rests the right to change the form of their government, subject to the approval of Congress, given before or after steps for the formation of a State Government have been taken; and further, that a Territorial government is extra-constitutional, and, at best, under ordinances of Congress, purely temporary.

4. Resolved, That the Constitution framed at Topeka, by the representatives of the people of Kansas, and ratified by popular vote, is still the choice of a majority of our citizens, as the form of a State Government, and that we maintain and urge on Congress our immediate admission as a State under it.

5. Resolved, That the policy of the Free State party has always been averse to any movement of an aggressive character, and that violence has never been resorted to save in self defence.

6. Resolved, That we make no tests for membership in the Free State party, save that of the exclusion of domestic slavery from Kansas by subsequent legislation.

7. Resolved, That we regard the presence of peaceful relations between our citizens as conducive to their best personal welfare as well as indispensable to the perfect development and expansion of the various economical interests of the Territory, to the end therefore that such relations may be obtained and permanently established amongst us we earnestly appeal to all men of whatever party, to submit all differences of opinion growing out of the question of our future internal domestic institutions, to the test of sound reason, and enlightened, though friendly discussion, and to the final arbitrament of the ballot-box.

Provided, That any attempt to abridge or impair the freedom of speech, oral or written, or of the ballot box, or other constitutional rights, will be held as just cause of departure from this policy.

8. Resolved, That Congress having presented the principles of Squatter sovereignty enunciated in the Kansas Bill as the basis of the political action of the people of Kansas, we are inflexibly determined to abide by its faithful execution, as we ever have resolutely opposed its violation, and ever will while it remains on the Statute book.

Miscellaneous.

Whereas, Hon. James Buchanan, in a debate in the Senate of the United States on the admission of Michigan into the Union with a Constitution framed in a similar manner to the State Constitution of Kansas, declared the people "stood upon their rights—rights secured to them by the Constitution," that having formed a Constitution, elected their officers, "and the whole machinery of a State Government being perfected—that having assumed this attitude they could demand their admission as a matter of right," and as "an act of justice," and that to repel a State under such circumstances is sufficient to induce fear for the consequences and cause statesmen to "tremble at an act of such injustice," and

Whereas, The present Democratic Administration, by virtue of the pledges made by its leaders in the late Presidential campaign, is in all honor bound to use its influence, and lend its aid to make Kansas a Free State; and

Whereas, The Democratic party has in some of the States, made the admission of Kansas as a Free State, the issue in the election of James Buchanan, and large numbers of Democrats were influenced to vote for him upon this issue; therefore

1. Resolved, That the people of Kansas have a right to look with confidence to the present Chief Executive of the nation for an approval of their course, and for his assistance in procuring their admission into the Union under the Topeka Constitution.

2. Resolved, That this Convention would urge upon the State Legislature, the importance of assembling in June according to adjournment, and take such action as may be necessary to secure the vitality of the State Government, and its recognition by Congress.



